

REAL TIME

FAITH®

REAL-TIME FAITH® is a Sabbath School curriculum offering an application-oriented study of Scripture for earliteens.

Second Quarter 2025

Lifestyles of the Kingdom-Minded





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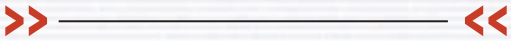
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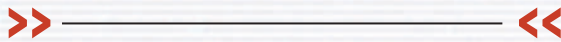


WHAT THE LESSONS ARE ABOUT

These lessons are about God’s kingdom of grace and being a recruited citizen (steward) of that kingdom. There is a battle going on between God’s kingdom and the kingdom of evil. Being citizens of God’s kingdom requires action. We can’t just listen to what Jesus asks of us; we are to do it (James 1:22) if we want to be effective citizens of the kingdom on this earth.

The first lesson of each quarter covers a different section of Jesus’ sermon on the mount, which is “at once Christ’s inaugural address as King of the kingdom of grace and also the constitution of the kingdom” (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 322).

After the first lesson of each quarter the rest of the lessons are about the different challenges, rights, or privileges in the “real time” of being a citizen of God’s kingdom. A Christian never knows what he or she will be encountering next.



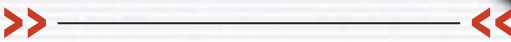
HOW TO USE THIS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

>> STEP 1: Notice that this Bible study guide isn’t meant to be read like a usual magazine or book. Each lesson comes out of the binding to be used as a separate sheet for study in advance during the week in preparation for Sabbath School. Be sure to take the right lesson to Sabbath School with you each week.

>> STEP 2: Use each week’s lesson in the way that is best for you. Each section has a day of the week listed beside it, but you may want to mix and match sections as you study. The sections work in any order.

>> STEP 3: Review the memory verse each day of the week.

>> STEP 4: Be prepared to share your thoughts and discoveries with your Sabbath School class.



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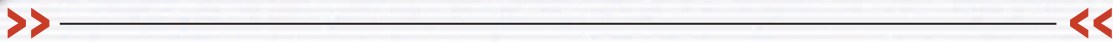
Thanks to:

Marklynn Bazy, Lyndelle Chiomenti, Debbie Eisele, James Feldbush, Judy Shull, and the General Conference Stewardship Department.

Photography:

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Postmaster: Send address changes to *REAL-TIME FAITH*, P.O. Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353. Postage paid in Nampa, Idaho, and additional mailing offices. Single copy, US\$15.99 plus postage. One year, United States: US\$53.44; Canada and foreign: US\$63.44. Prices subject to change without notice.

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CHARACTER BUILDING OR ADDICTION

It started out so innocent. Alison and her brother Nelson were out of school for the summer, and once a week they went to the library to read and bring home books to read for the rest of the week. At first they selected reading material that was inspirational and educational. They were learning about history, health, and nature.

Then one day Nelson picked up a science-fiction book about space, aliens, and heroes, and Alison picked up a fiction book about fairies, castles, and white knights.

Soon all they were reading were fictional books. When they would pick up a book on history or nature, they found it was no longer fun or interesting to read. They also found that they were no longer eager to read their Bibles, Sabbath School lessons, or their inspirational character-building books. They even lost interest in attending church. They weren't sure why, but they knew something was wrong.

Alison and Nelson decided to speak to their youth pastor and asked if he knew what was wrong with their spiritual life. After much discussion Pastor Mike recommended they do an experiment. He suggested they stop going to the library and reading the types of books they were reading. He suggested they give their minds a chance to recover from the overstimulating and sensational books they had been reading. After the pastor prayed with them, Alison and Nelson agreed to take on the challenge.

A few weeks later Pastor Mike spoke to Alison and Nelson again and gave them each an autobiography about a leading neurosurgeon and suggested they read it and then let him know how it went.

Alison and Nelson were surprised that they enjoyed the book. They asked Pastor Mike why it was that they once again seemed to enjoy true stories. Pastor Mike explained that when we overstimulate the brain with fiction we lose the desire to read wholesome literature that has moral and spiritual value. He shared Matthew 6:24 with them: "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." In other words, we cannot expect to love God if we fill our minds and thoughts with literature from books that do not draw us closer to Him. How important it is that we prayerfully evaluate each decision and carefully choose to store in the mind only worthwhile information that will help us grow closer to Jesus!

—Kathleen D. Sowards

Sabbath

FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ:** "By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. . . . Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love."
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 60-63

Sunday

RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 12:1, 2.
- » You see your friend reading and ask, "What are you reading?"
- » Your friend begins to tell you about the book and concludes his description with "It's the most exciting book I've ever read—wanna borrow it when I'm finished?"
- » What do you think? Sound like something you'd like to read?
- » You find out that the story your friend is reading has no character-building or educational value lesson. What do you tell your friend? Do you really think it matters what you read?

Monday

BIBLE ANSWERS ON GROWING IN CHRIST

- » Read 2 Peter 3:18; Psalm 1:1, 2; Ephesians 6:12, 13.
- » Keeping our eyes and thoughts on Jesus is our only safeguard against temptation and sin. We should not allow anything that is empty of true meaning and value to distract us from what really matters. Getting to know Jesus, building a relationship with Him, and using our time to help others learn of His love are things that matter most in life.
- » How could certain types of reading materials hinder your relationship with God?
- » What types of books can build your character and help you toward a closer relationship with Jesus?
- » Fill in the blanks. The text is from the New King James Version.

"_____ therefore, having girded your waist with _____, having put on the breastplate of _____, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the _____; above all, taking the shield of _____ with which you will be able to _____ the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of _____, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the _____; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being _____ to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Ephesians 6:14-18).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Some read only when they are required to read a book for school. But good reading can change your life! How does a Christian young person who loves to read choose books that are good? Does it matter?
- » We're supposed to fill our minds with things that will bring us closer to Jesus. Some books cannot do that. In fact, many books would separate us from Jesus. Reading—just like watching TV or movies, or listening to music—affects us. What we take into our brain shapes our way of thinking. What information will you allow into your mind that will impact your future decisions?
- » "Those who would not fall a prey to Satan's devices must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts" (Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 403).

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the verse to the correct reference.

Galatians 5:19-23 2 Corinthians 3:18 Colossians 3:1, 2
Philippians 4:8 Colossians 1:9, 10 Romans 12:1, 2

"If there is anything praiseworthy—meditate . . ."	
"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind."	
"Increasing in the knowledge of God . . ."	
"The fruit of the Spirit is . . ."	
"Being transformed into the same image . . ."	
"Set your mind on things above."	

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Philippians 4:8.
- » Review the memory text.
- » So how do you choose what to read? Is an entertaining story line the most important thing? That's usually what draws us into a book, but it's not really the best way to choose your reading material. As a Christian, you need to choose books that will build you up and help you develop a strong character. A good story strengthens your faith in God and helps you to grow in God's image. Also, when we read only novels and stories for entertainment, we find it harder to focus on serious reading—such as the Bible, or your textbooks at school. Find some quality nonfiction to exercise your brain. Try something different from what you usually read and stretch your mind in a new direction. Reading can introduce you to people who made a difference in the world and stood for the right, foreign countries, unknown scientific discoveries. There's no limit to learning when you set your mind to it.
- » But try applying biblical standards, especially those found in Philippians 4:8. Ask yourself if the book you are planning to read will fill your mind with the kind of things you want. Does it match the standards of God's Word? Will reading it make you a better Christian, a more loving friend and family member?
- » Don't be afraid to read! But don't be afraid to question your reading, either—and to close the book if you see that it's leading you away from God rather than closer to Him.
- » "Receive into the soul by faith the incorruptible seed of the word, and it will bring forth a character and a life after the similitude of the character and the life of God" (Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 38).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
- » In the table below, try to list as many books you have read as you can remember reading in the past year. (Some of you may fill only a couple lines, while some may need extra pages. That's OK!) Next to each one, check all the boxes that apply to it. Look over your list and think about what you can add to your reading menu to build spiritual muscle—and what you might need to take away.

TITLE	AUTHOR	MADE ME A STRONGER CHRISTIAN	DIDN'T HELP ME AS A CHRISTIAN





THE *BOUNTY*'S BIBLE

In 1787, on a ship called the *Bounty*, William Bligh made a voyage to the South Pacific on a mission to collect breadfruit trees. Of course, a crew of men willingly signed on for the journey when they heard it was a trip to such a beautiful place. Bligh made his friend Fletcher Christian his second in command. The men loved Tahiti so much that they didn't want to leave. When ordered to do so, several men attempted to run and hide, but were caught and severely punished. The drama of wrenching these men from their tropical paradise soured the atmosphere on the *Bounty* to the point of rebellion. In 1789 Captain Bligh's own friend Fletcher Christian instigated a mutiny that would be written about and portrayed in movies for years to come. In the middle of the ocean Bligh and those who remained faithful to him were abandoned on a lifeboat to make their own way to land.

With the captain gone it would seem that the crew would be happy. However, those left on the *Bounty* continued to fight about what to do and where to go. Fletcher Christian returned to Tahiti and kidnapped some women and slaves before the group made their way to Pitcairn Island. The group began to quarrel. They quickly learned to distill alcohol. Crimes became common, and by 1808 all the men except John Adams were dead, either from disease or murder. Adams was the only man left on the deserted island with a group of women and children.

What does this story have to do with the Bible? Adams found a Bible that had been left on the *Bounty*. He pored through the passages of Scripture, and as he studied, God's Word penetrated deep into his heart. He began to share the good news of Scripture with those in his little community. They learned of God's love for them through this neglected Book that had simply taken up space on the ship. Twenty years later, when another ship happened upon Pitcairn Island, the crew found a happy, wholesome Christian community with no sign of the evil qualities that had brought the people to the island in the first place. Today that Bible sits on display on Pitcairn Island as a testimony of the power of God's message to people.



Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 1, The Holy Scriptures:** "The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration. . . . In this Word, God has committed to humanity the knowledge necessary for salvation."
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 18-21

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 15:4.
- » How often do you study the Bible to see what God's message has to say to you?

☐ every day

☐ once a week

☐ once a month

☐ 3-4 times a year

☐ almost never

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

- » Read Psalm 119:105; John 17:17; Hebrews 4:12.
- » God has not left us without guidance to help us navigate this life. He wants us to be with Him in heaven, and the Bible is our map. The Bible, God's love letter to us, tells us who God is and how to have a relationship with Him. It tells us how to avoid a life of sin and how we can live full and satisfying lives in Him.
- » How is the Bible helping you get to know God?
- » How is the Bible helping you get to know yourself better?
- » Fill in the missing words from the word bank below.

all	assured	childhood	complete	continue
correction	doctrine	equipped	faith	Holy
inspiration	instruction	known	learned	profitable
reproof	righteousness	salvation	Scriptures	wise

"But you must _____ in the things which you have _____ and been _____ of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from _____ you have _____ the _____, which are able to make you _____ for _____ through _____ which is in Christ Jesus. _____ Scripture is given by _____ of God, and is _____ for _____, for _____, for _____, for _____ in _____, that the man of God may be _____, thoroughly _____ for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:14-18).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Luke 6:48, 49.
- » “Nearly nine out of 10 churched teenagers said their church experience exposed them to Bible stories (95 percent), taught them about the lives of great people in the Bible (92 percent), and gave them fun experiences related to religion (89 percent). But only half (53 percent) said their church experience helped them understand the Bible well enough to help them make decisions based on biblical principles.”
—From “Real Religion,” *Christian Parenting Today* (Winter 2003)
- » What do you think the problem is? Why does it seem so hard to live out the truths in God’s Word and put them into practice? Perhaps we forget why Jesus has given us the Bible—that the messages are there to help us. The Bible was meant to be a foundation for us to build our lives on. To illustrate this point, Jesus told the parable of the man who built his house on a rock. He said, “He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock” (Luke 6:48). Of course, the opposite is true of the person who hears God’s Word but doesn’t put it into practice—“But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great” (Luke 6:49).
- » How can we integrate the messages of Scripture into our daily lives? Have you discovered God’s voice through His Word? You may know which day is the Sabbath but haven’t truly found Sabbath rest. You might know what happens when a person dies, according to Scripture, but have you ever had shared the words of Scripture with someone who was grieving the loss of a loved one?
- » It may be that the missing link in our communication with God is learning how to allow and apply His Word in shaping the way we live each moment.
- » “Every revelation of God to the soul increases the capacity to know and to love” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 20).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Romans 10:17.
 - » There are two basic questions to ask yourself as you study the Bible. Take time to listen to God as you read His Word this week and think about these two questions as a framework for your study. Journal your thoughts about what God is trying to say to you, and plan a course of action for how you might apply that to your life this week.
 - » What is God saying to me in this passage?
 - » How am I going to apply what I learned from this Bible passage?
-

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the verse to the correct reference. All verses are taken from the New King James Version.
- 2 Peter 1:20, 21

Romans 15:4

John 20:30, 31

Hebrews 1:1, 2

Psalms 102:18

Proverbs 30:5, 6

“That a people yet to be created may praise . . .”	
“Spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets . . .”	
“Holy men of God spoke as they were moved.”	
“He is a shield to those who put . . .”	
“Written for our learning . . .”	
“Written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ . . .”	

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Justine received weekly letters from her grandmother who lived across the country. There were coupons, newspaper clippings, interesting happenings and comments about the weather in each letter. While at summer camp she received a typical letter from Grandma. Someone in her cabin noticed the letter and asked about it. Her response was short and glib. “My grandma is always sending me this stuff. Every week I get a letter from her with all this stuff in it. I never know what to do with it.” The fellow camper said, “Well, it’s obvious that she loves you very much.” Those words struck Justine in a powerful way. She had never thought about why her grandma would write so often. With new understanding she began to look forward to her grandmother’s letters and read each one with joy and happiness.
- » Maybe the reason God has spoken through the Bible needs to sink into your heart today. If you would be reminded of God’s message through His Word, how would it change the way you read it? Understanding the purpose of Scripture can provide the right attitude in which to read and study it. It’s a letter from Someone who dearly loves you. The stories and lessons in the Bible will help our faith to grow. God longs for us to give Him our hearts so He can transform us and make us ready to live eternally with Him. How important is the Bible to you?
- » “The more we know of God, the higher will be our ideal of character and the more earnest our longing to reflect His likeness” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 19).



WEARING THE LABEL

Janel was excited when her sister Shaina got home from her senior class trip to New York. She couldn't wait to hear about all the fun Shaina and her friends had had on the trip.

"Hey, I bought these for you," Shaina said, handing Janel a shopping bag. Inside were three sweatshirts, all with the logo of Janel's favorite designer on them.

"Wow! What a cool gift, Shaina, thanks! Three of them? These are so expensive!"

"Not in New York City," Shaina grinned. "We found a place that was selling them for about \$10 each."

"You're kidding!" Janel gave her sister a big hug. The next day she proudly wore one of the designer sweatshirts to school.

Two evenings later, when she pulled another of the new sweatshirts off over her head, she heard a ripping noise. "Oh, no!" she cried out.

Janel's mom stuck her head into the room. "What happened?"

Janel showed her mom the long rip in the side seam of the sweatshirt. "I can't believe it tore so easily—the first time I wore it! Their stuff is usually really good quality. Anyway, I know they have a guarantee, so maybe I can send it back to the company and get it replaced or something. I wonder if Shaina kept the receipts."

Janel's mom sat down on the bed and turned the sweatshirt inside out, looking at all the seams. "Janel, how much did Shaina say she paid for this sweatshirt?"

"Ten bucks."

"And how much would it be normally?"

"Oh, at least \$50. I've seen them even more expensive than that."

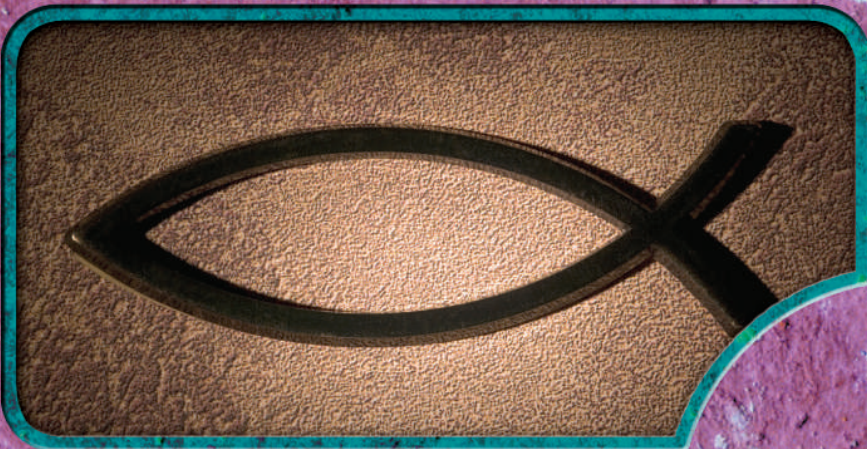
Mom sighed. "I think your sister got taken, Janel—and I don't think the designer will be sending you any replacement sweatshirts."

"What do you mean, taken?"

"Sometimes people manufacture cheap clothes and slap the label of an expensive designer on the front. It's illegal, of course, but they often get away with it. Lots of people are just happy to have the designer label. They don't realize they're not getting the same quality."

Janel looked down at the torn shirt. She could still wear the other two—until they fell apart, which probably wouldn't be that long, she realized. Everyone would see the label and think she was wearing a top-quality product. But she would know different. Looking up, she caught her mom's smile.

Janel might have pondered, *How could these good-looking sweatshirts be of such poor quality?* Mother was right when she said, "It's what's on the inside that matters." Indeed, it is your character that matters to God.



Sabbath

FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 10, The Experience of Salvation:** "Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life."
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 40

Sunday

RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 7:16-23.
- » You're reading a teen Sabbath School lesson. So you probably consider yourself a Christian. You're wearing the label. But what's inside the package?
- » If someone claims to be a Christian, does that make them a Christian? If you really wanted to know whether someone was a Christian, what questions could you ask to find out?

Monday

BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE
EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION

- » Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 12:2; and 2 Peter 1:3, 4.
- » As God's sons and daughters we are called to live as light in this dark world. Because we have experienced the gift of salvation that comes through Jesus, we are responsible to share it with others as well. Unlike material gifts, the gift of salvation is multiplied exponentially in our heart when we share it with others.
- » How has Jesus made all things new in your life when you decided to invite Him into your heart?
- » How are you an ambassador of Jesus? How do you share with others the message of salvation?
- » Unscramble and replace the mixed-up words below so you can read the message. The message is from the New King James Version.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you tneserp your bodies a gnivil sacrifice, holy, elbatpecca to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be demrofnoc to this world, but be demrofsnart by the gniwener of your dnim, that you may evorp what is that good and acceptable and tcefrep will of God" (snamor 12:1, 2).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you _____ your bodies a _____ sacrifice, holy, _____ to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be _____ to this world, but be _____ by the _____ of your _____, that you may _____ what is that good and acceptable and _____ will of God" (_____ 12:1, 2).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read John 3:3-8.
- » Who’s a Christian? Do you have to go to church to be a Christian?
- » Do you have to believe Jesus is the Son of God?
- » What if you think Jesus was just a good man but you want to follow His teachings? Can you still be a Christian?
- » How do we know if we’re Christians?
- » What difference does wearing Jesus’ name make to the quality of our character?
- » “Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service” (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 115).

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Match the text to the correct reference. All texts are taken from the New King James Version.

Romans 8:14-17	Galatians 3:26	Isaiah 45:22
1 Peter 1:23	Matthew 7:21-23	1 Peter 2:21, 22
Colossians 1:13, 14	Acts 16:31	Romans 10:17

“He who does the will of My Father in heaven.”	
“I am God, and there is no other.”	
“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing . . .”	
“We are children of God, and if children, then heirs.”	
“Leaving us an example, that you should follow . . .”	
“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.”	
“You are all sons of God through faith.”	
“We have redemption through His blood.”	
“Born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible . . .”	

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Romans 10:9, 10.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Maybe you’ve wondered, Am I really a Christian? *Sure, I go to church—maybe I’ve even been baptized—but can I really call myself a Christian?* First, relax. It’s not about being “good enough,” or believing a complicated list of doctrines. If you love Jesus and want to follow Him, if you’ve asked Him to forgive your sins and come into your heart, you can be confident that you’re a Christian.
- » But the Bible does tell us that Christians are different from other people. When you become a Christian, you begin a new life. It’s not something that happens overnight—it’s more like starting out on a journey. At first your surroundings may be familiar, but as you keep traveling, things begin to change. The Bible—especially the story of Jesus—paints us a picture of what this new life is like. If we wear Jesus’ name, we want to live as He lived. That’s why it’s important to read the Bible—we need to know what the original is like if we want to copy it!
- » Maybe we can go beyond asking, *Am I a Christian?* Perhaps we need to ask, *How am I letting Jesus change me? Am I following Him?*
- » “But when we turn toward the Sun of Righteousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 40).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- » All through this week’s lesson we’ve been thinking about what it means to be a Christian.
- » Think back over what you’ve learned this week about being a Christian. Look over the Bible verses in Wednesday’s lesson. Then circle the phrase that makes the statement below correct, and complete the next sentence with a few thoughts of your own.
- » I (am, am not) a Christian.
- » I know this is true because

- » If you circled “I am a Christian,” take a moment to talk to God and thank Him for the gift that made it possible for you to be part of His family. Renew your commitment to Him today.
- » If you circled “I am not a Christian,” where do you want to go from here? Is there a “next step” you need to or want to take? Talk to the Lord about it, then talk to a trusted Christian friend or family member.





Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 13, The Remnant and Its Mission:** “The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. . . . Every believer is called to have a personal part in this world-wide witness.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 88-91

INTO ALL THE WORLD

Wycliffe Bible Translators have been translating the Word of God into as many languages as possible. Cameron Townsend, pioneer of linguistic and missionary endeavors in Central America, desperately wanted to translate the Bible into the local Indian languages of Mexico. In 1935 Townsend and his wife, Elvira, with several students who had learned his methods, went to Mexico to undertake their work. The group settled in a tiny Aztec village, a two-hour mountain drive from Mexico City, and began learning the language of the local people. They had the support of the secretary of labor, who was interested in a cultural program for the Indians. He had his department publish Townsend’s primers for teaching Aztecs to read.

Townsend worked diligently to improve the quality of their life while celebrating the unique qualities of their culture. In the village where he worked day to day, he noticed a freshwater spring that ran down the backside of the village, only to be wasted on the steep slope. He encouraged the villagers to plant crops in such a way as to take advantage of the water supply. They diverted the spring to an open area, and soon successful crops were producing much food. The economy in that area blossomed, and Townsend wrote an article about the whole experience.

The article found its way to the desk of the president of Mexico, Lázaro Cárdenas, who was curious about this gringo (foreigner) who would live among his people and help them in such a profound way. Townsend had gone to live in an area where even the local government employees refused to live. The president made a journey to the village to meet Townsend, and when the car pulled into the center of the village, the humble missionary made his way over to meet the visitors. Townsend greeted the president and was surprised to be greeted with “You are the man I have come to see! Tell me about what you are doing here.” Townsend shared his story and reminded the president of his desire to translate the Scriptures into the local language. Lázaro Cárdenas gladly allowed him to translate the Bible into the local tongue; this began a friendship with the Mexican government that lasted many years. During that season of favor the gospel spread throughout the region, and the Word of God flourished among many different cultures.

Mission work is all about sharing the gospel, but in many scenarios, the walls have to be broken down by selfless service and hard work. This is how the the Savior worked on behalf of people. Can you think of some examples in the life of Christ?



Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 28:18-20.
- » On the forum are posted some requests for your feedback about mission. Be sure to go online and share what you think it takes to be a missionary.

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE
REMNANT AND ITS MISSION

- » Read Jeremiah 23:3; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Revelation 14:6.
- » God has called us to a special work as we live in the last days of the history of this world. To share the good news about Jesus, we need to let His light shine through our actions and words. We are called to serve others with kindness and to lead them to the compassionate and loving Savior.
- » As we are rapidly approaching the second coming of Jesus, how are you responding to His Great Commission?

- » What are ways you can do your part in serving others and sharing God’s love through actions and words?

- » Using the word list, find the missing words to read the following Bible texts. All texts are from the New King James Version.

appear commandments done ends world
go light preach testimony

“And He said to them, ‘ _____ into all the _____ and _____ the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned’ ” (Mark 16:15, 16).

“I will also give You as a _____ to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the _____ of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6).

“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the _____ of God and have the _____ of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 12:17).

“For we must all _____ before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has _____, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read Matthew 9:35-38.
- » One of the most moving scenes in all of Scripture is found in Matthew 9:35-38: "Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.' "
- » Compassion moves people to action. From a distance, you can pity someone who is hurting. You can even sympathize and hurt for people who are suffering, because you know what they are going through is horrible. But you can still stay home and do nothing.
- » Compassion, as seen in the life of Jesus, forces people to act. Jesus shouts, "I need workers to help!" Most people stop short of responding because they do not know what to do.
- » Start with your money. People who give to missions are more likely to live with the spirit of mission. Another paraphrase might be "Put your money where you want your heart to be."
- » Carve out time to pray for and write letters to missionaries.
- » Sponsor a student missionary with letters of encouragement from home.
- » Send Bibles to a school or church overseas.
- » These are just a few ideas. The important thing is to do something. And it seems that the more you do, the more you will know what to do. It is not entirely clear why this is true, but it works. Try it.
- » "He who gives money or time for spreading the gospel enlists his own interest and prayers for the work, and for the souls to be reached through it; his affections go out to others, and he is stimulated to greater devotion to God, that he may be enabled to do them the greatest good" (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 90).

Thursday

CONNECTING

- » Read Isaiah 61:1-3.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Try to imagine yourself as a follower of Jesus when He was alive on this earth. Envision how compelling it must be to watch Jesus as He walks among the people, hearing and caring, coaching and giving. People are drawn to the Savior because He saves. He helps. He changes people with the touch of His hand or the truths in His message. When Jesus walks through a town, people are different.
- » Now jump back to reality, 2,000 years later. Would it surprise you to know that He promised the same kind of results for you? Check this out: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father" (John 14:12).
- » Sounds unbelievable? Not for God. Look at the book of Acts and see for yourself that it's ordinary people doing little things for their Savior who produce extraordinary stories. What we have to remember is that these great people, these workers for God, are just like you and me. Ordinary people. But the step from ordinary to extraordinary is the moment we do the little things in response to God's call to "go."

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Complete the crossword. All texts are from the New King James Version.

[illegible]

Across:

1. "Go into all the world and preach the gospel" is known as the Great _____ (Mark 16:15).
3. In Matthew 28:20 Jesus said He would _____ be with us—"even to the end of the age."
4. What will melt according to 2 Peter 3:10-14?
6. God's message is to go "to every nation, tribe, tongue, and _____" (Revelation 14:6).
8. God is looking for a people that "have the _____ of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17).
9. "_____ them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20).

Down:

1. God is looking for a people that keep His _____ (Revelation 12:17).
2. In the last days, we are to proclaim the three angels' _____ to all the world (Revelation 14:6-12).
5. Jesus sends the Holy _____ to give us power to witness for Him (Acts 1:8).
7. Jesus has asked us to _____ (Mark 16:15).

Friday

APPLYING

- » Read Jude 3.
- » With a group of your friends or family members, choose areas of the world to pray for this week (and every week). Pray for a different area each day, or have each person choose a different area to pray for all week.
- » Go to www.adventistyearbook.org/, scroll down to the map of the world, and click on a colored area you want to pray for. You will be taken to plenty of specific names and places for which to pray. You may even want to send the ones you pray for a letter and encourage them to continue serving diligently for the gospel (the addresses are there too). Imagine how powerful it would be if teens from all over the world were praying for and sending notes of encouragement to those working around the world!



Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 12, The Church:** “The church is God’s family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 93-95

WORLD CHANGERS

The Waldensians were a small group of faithful Bible-believing Christians who dared to be different. They refused to accept the decrees of the state-sponsored church in place of the Word of God. For them, the commands of God were more important than the traditions of people. The state church responded with an army to destroy them.

Along with thousands of others the Waldensians died rather than compromise their integrity. They accepted martyrdom rather than surrender their faith. The witness of these faithful martyrs calls us to loyalty. Their testimony calls us to an unwavering commitment to God. God is calling this generation to a deeper commitment. He is calling us to an uncompromising faith, to a steadfast loyalty to His Word.

The purpose of the church is not to compromise with the world; it is to change it. It is not to conform to the world; it is to transform it. The church is not merely a corporate institution, although the church is organized for a mission. The church is a body of converted Christians saved by grace, committed to His will, with a mission to the world. The church is God’s people redeemed to serve, meeting needs everywhere in Jesus’ name. The church is administrators, pastors, laypeople, youth, children, you, and me sharing His love, proclaiming His truth to everyone everywhere. The church is us—all of us.

The stalwart faith of the Waldensians echoes down the corridors of time. The unshakable faith of these heroes of yesterday speaks to our hearts. Today, why not determine again, by God’s grace, to be faithful until He comes?

—Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, pp. 118, 119, 173

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 12:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:14, 15.
- » A group of youth was working on a service project together. They were washing cars and cleaning them thoroughly, inside and out. No donations were accepted; it was a gift to the community. Unfortunately, a thoughtless comment about someone’s inadequacy at washing cars slipped out. Everyone had been working so well together; however, in one moment it seemed that the mission was gone, the team was split, and what was fun had become a chore. What would you do if you were the leader and had several hours of work left to do? How would you get your team back on track?
- » When have you experienced synergy before? (When the whole is better than the value of all the parts.) When have you had a great team success? Describe what happened and show how the team was more effective than any one person’s strengths.

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE CHURCH

- » Read Matthew 28:19, 20; Ephesians 2:19-22; 2 Peter 2:9.
 - » Christ is the foundation of the church. He has saved us. God gives each of us a special gift (talent) and the Holy Spirit helps us to use our talents to build up His church and share His message of salvation with others. He promises to always be with us.
 - » As a part of God’s “household,” what goals can you set that will help you today, this week, this month, to use your talents to work together with others in the church to tell others about His love?
 - » Cross out the word “disunity” every time it appears and then rewrite the verse below so you can read the message God has for His followers.
- “BdisunityydisunitythdisunityisdisunityalldisunitywidisunitydisunitylldisunitykdisunitynodisunitywdisunitythdisunityatdisunityyodisunityuadisunityredisunityMdisunityydisunitydidisunityscidisunitypledisunitysidisunityfydisunityoudisunityhadisunityvedisunityldisunityovedisunityfodisunityrodisunitynedisunityandisunityothdisunityer” (disunityJdisunityohdisunityndisunity 13:35, NKJV).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.
- » While a group were building a church in Sarawak, it became clear how all the parts are needed for the whole project to work. For example, during the building project the early risers would bring bags of cement to be mixed before breakfast. As every new person trickled in to help, more work was accomplished; windows were placed in the walls, lumber was cut, and water was distributed to thirsty workers. Some were encouraging; others were teaching; still others were arguing about what needed to happen right away. The older, more experienced men and women found young people listening to their wisdom. Those who were only young at heart were inspired by the dedication of the youth. It was because all hands were on deck that the goal of the mission prevailed. Not one person could take credit, and not one person entertained the impossible notion that they could have done it alone. So it is with the church—your church.
- » It is no wonder when Jesus said “You are the salt of the earth” and “You are the light of the world,” He was using the plural form of “you.” In other words, when you all come together with all your different personalities—you have a power greater than one person who seems great.
- » Scan through the verses mentioned in this lesson, and you will see that we were designed to need each other in the same way that the body needs a hand, or a foot, or the eyes. It might be one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome, but the collective work of a church on a mission is the church at its finest. Don’t think for a moment that it will be easy, but know that it is worth it. When we truly embrace this truth as a church, we will have success beyond our wildest dreams. The possibilities are endless.
- » “Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin” (Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 286).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Romans 16.
- » Put yourself in Paul’s shoes and write a modern-day chapter about your church. Make sure you reread Romans 16 to get a feel for what Paul was doing. Try to sound like Paul—if you can. Use the names of families, pastors, teachers, and elders to reflect the work that is taking place in your area. Paul greeted them, acknowledged their gifts and sacrifices, and simply said hello. Write your letter on the lines below or on separate paper:

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Decode the following message by inserting each substitute letter. The text is from the New King James Version.
- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | F | Y | U | H | D | Q | A | E | R | N | P | C | L | O | Z | X | K | M | W | I | V | T | G | J | B |
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
- “w a h l a h m s e u w o w a h c, ‘w a h
- a s k v h m w w k i p j e m q k h s w, f i w
- w a h p s f o k h k m s k h d h t;
- w a h k h d o k h z k s j w a h p o k u o d
- w a h a s k v h m w w o m h l u o i w
- p s f o k h k m e l w o a e m a s k v h m w’ ”
- (P I N H 1 0 : 2) .

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Hebrews 10:23-25.
- » Review the memory text.
- » As you read the writings of Paul you can’t help noticing what a team player he is. He is a legend, yet throughout his letters he names people he notices doing the work of God. He learned this from God Himself. If you ever wonder if God notices the little things you do, then be reminded of the promise that “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6). What is so amazing is the way that God sees both our strengths and weaknesses and still believes the best is yet to come for all of us. Don’t miss out on the moments in which you can join the crowd of believers as they work toward heaven’s goal. At times you might feel like one sheep in a huge flock, but be reminded that the Shepherd knows your name.
- » “In every word and act, kindness and love will be revealed; and as each worker fills his appointed place faithfully, the prayer of Christ for the unity of His followers will be answered, and the world will know that these are His disciples” (Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 483).





Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries:** “God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 79-81

SERVANT LEADERS

Moses is the preeminent figure in the Old Testament. Naturally shy and humble, he sought obscurity. But when the Lord called him to rescue the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, this man of faith revealed the courage, tenacity, and moral convictions of a true hero. Although Moses would reveal great flaws more than once, he was the great spiritual leader of his people.

Moses barely survived infancy. Threatened by the growing number of Israelites in Egypt, the pharaoh issued a decree to kill all male Hebrews under 2 years old. Moses’ mother hid her child. She placed him in an “ark of bulrushes” and “laid it in the reeds by the river’s bank” (Exodus 2:3). Miraculously, the pharaoh’s daughter discovered the crying baby. Moses’ sister, Miriam, watching the child from a distance, offered her mother’s assistance in raising Moses.

Moses’ mother raised him his first 12 years. He was then educated in the pharaoh’s royal school. We might reasonably assume Moses was given the best possible education in reading, writing, history, geography, political science, management, leadership—lessons he used well when he later led the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage.

God brought victory out of defeat through one faithful, humble, godly man. Moses prefigures Christ. In the New Testament, Jesus is the Moses of His people. He is the deliverer. He is the mighty conqueror. He is the one who will lead us to victory. He still turns defeats into victories. He still delivers us from bondage. He still causes us to triumph.

—Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, p. 204

Servant leadership is an attribute that both Moses and Jesus displayed in their God-appointed mission. They both refused to adopt the world’s popular model of leadership. Moses and Jesus did not choose the path of fame, popularity, and worldly power. They did not use their influence to build their own earthly kingdoms. Their model of leadership did not have any trace of selfish ambition. In fact, God Himself assigned their mission. Moses was called to deliver the Israelites from their Egyptian captivity. Jesus, the Son of God, was the promised Messiah sent from heaven to deliver the human race from Satan’s captivity. Moses and Jesus used their influence to lead people to God and to call them to obedience to His commandments. Their lives were marked by renunciation, self-sacrifice, and wholehearted service for the cause of God. Yet their reward was infinitely worth the cost. Through eternal ages the whole universe will witness the transformed lives of the great multitude of human beings who accepted the gift of salvation and will be in God’s kingdom. This is the path that marks servant leadership. Are you willing to serve God faithfully and lead others to Him no matter the cost?



Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 23:11, 12.
- » In this year’s Student Association elections, three candidates are running. Candidate A, Jim, is an extremely popular student, a star basketball player, active in the church youth group. He’s good-looking, and everyone likes him. Candidate B, Michele, is a quiet, studious girl who gets straight As and wants to study law. Of the three of them she seems to really have the best ideas about how student government should work and what she can do to improve the school. Candidate C, Dave, is a nice guy but not a superstar. His grades are good enough to run for president, but not straight As. He has lots of friends, but he’s not what you’d call super-popular. Mostly, people know Dave as someone who works hard. He tutors underprivileged kids at a community center after school, he coaches a kids’ soccer team for free, and he’s gone on two church mission trips and been the hardest-working member of the team.
- » Whom are you going to vote for? What qualities do you think are most important in a leader?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON
SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND
MINISTRIES

- » Read Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 1 Timothy 3:1-13.
- » God has given each of us gifts to be used to help others, share His message of love, and to glorify Him. God will lead us to people who need help, and it is our job to respond. He has also presented to us traits that will help us be His messengers, reflecting His love to the world.
- » How can you use the gifts God has given you to help others today?
- » Fill in the blanks using the words from the word bank. The texts are from the New King James Version.

all another belong forever glorified
good ministers received speak supplies

“As each one has _____ a gift, minister it to one _____, as _____ stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him _____ as the oracles of God. If anyone _____, let him do it as with the ability which God _____, that in _____ things God may be _____ through Jesus Christ, to whom _____ the glory and the dominion _____ and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 4:10, 11).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read John 13:12-15.
- » How do you feel about serving and helping others? We’ve been told that we are supposed to help others. But is it something you do from your heart, or is it something you do just because you have been told to do it?
- » According to Jesus, it’s at the dead center of the Christian life. It’s what He’s going to be looking for when He comes back again. And it’s the only way to get ahead, to really succeed. Jesus isn’t going to be interested in impressed by your grades—although doing well in school reflects good discipline and diligence. Neither will He look for your sports trophies, your friends, your clothes, or any selfish pursuit, even your perfect Sabbath School attendance record. Jesus is looking for someone who’s willing to get down on their knees, get dirty, and start helping others.
- » That’s why Jesus did that little object lesson where He got down on His knees and washed the disciples’ dirty feet. Nobody else was willing to do it. Jesus showed that a real leader, a real success, a person filled with God’s Spirit, is the person who’s not afraid to get their hands dirty—serving others.
- » “One of the last acts of His [Jesus’] life on earth was to gird Himself as a servant, and perform a servant’s part” (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 644). “And those who would partake of His [Jesus’] divine attributes, and share with Him the joy of seeing souls redeemed, must follow His example of unselfish ministry” (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 651).

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the verse with the text. All verses are from the New King James Version.

Acts 6:1-7	Ephesians 4:11-16	James 1:27	Matthew 25:40
Micah 6:8	Matthew 20:25-28	Luke 14:12-14	1 Corinthians 12:27, 28
- 1. “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve . . .”
- 2. “God has appointed these in the church.”
- 3. “To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly . . .”
- 4. “Invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.”
- 5. “Then the word of God spread.”
- 6. “As you did it to one of the least of these . . .”
- 7. “Unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . .”
- 8. “Visit orphans and widows in their trouble.”

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read John 13:34, 35.
- » Jesus cared for those around Him and did many wonderful things—He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and raised the dead. We can serve and share Jesus with those around us who are hurting and are in need. Look back at yesterday’s suggestions for finding ways to serve and help others. Then jot down a few ideas about how God might be calling you to serve others:
- » Needs I see around me:
- » Things I’m good at and enjoy doing:
- » Where do the two connect? (How can I use my gifts to meet others’ needs?)

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Matthew 25:34-40.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Do you see yourself as a leader, or more as a follower? Either way, God is calling you to serve. That means serving Him by serving others. But how do you “serve others”? How do you know what God wants you to do for others?
- » Start looking around you. What are the needs you see in your family, in your school, in your community? Who are the people who need help?
- » Take a look at yourself too. God blessed you with natural talents and abilities, and He’ll help those to grow if you give them to Him to serve others. Where can your gifts be used to connect with other people’s needs?
- » Remember Jesus washing those disciples’ feet. He was becoming a servant in order to serve others. Real service may use your natural gifts and talents, but it will also involve being humble. Not drawing attention to yourself or getting praise for how great you are. Doing things that may be difficult, that others might not appreciate or understand. And sometimes, it will mean doing things that no one else is willing to do.
- » Serving others brings us closer to Jesus—and to other people too! Start looking for opportunities to answer God’s call to service today.
- » “If we work with wholehearted interest as a follower of Christ, the heart will be in close sympathy with God, and the Spirit of God, moving upon our spirit, will call forth the sacred harmonies of the soul in answer to the divine touch” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 83).



Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (John 17:20, 21).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ:** “We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 123, 124

CONQUERING
COMPLACENCY

There is not much left today, but Laodicea must have been quite a city. It is off the beaten path, and few tourists visit the site today. Very little excavation has been done. In its prime Laodicea was home to nearly 150,000 people. It was an important trade center of Asia Minor, an imperial city famous for the glossy black wool manufactured there. Laodicea was an extremely wealthy banking center. When it was destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 60, its citizens refused financial help to rebuild the city. The proud Laodiceans erected it out of their own resources. The city was also advanced in the healing arts. Its medical practitioners developed a well-known salve for the eyes. Revelation’s message to Laodicea reached this prosperous place toward the end of the first century. The letter addresses a spiritual problem that afflicts almost all of us at one time or another. The letter begins with Christ’s diagnosis of the problem. He says, “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth” (Revelation 3:15, 16). Jesus uses a metaphor to describe a spiritual problem. Lukewarm water is neither hot nor cold. It’s not hot enough to provide a good bath. It’s not cold enough to be good drinking water. It’s something you instinctively spew out of your mouth. What is the Doctor talking about? Complacency, indifference? The Laodiceans weren’t hot. They didn’t have a passion for knowing God. But they weren’t cold, either. They hadn’t rejected God. They weren’t exploring the alternative. They were lukewarm. They had just enough spiritual life to make them comfortable, but not enough to move them anywhere. What is the real answer to spiritual complacency? How do you rise out of spiritual lethargy? You begin by taking a step in faith. Stretch past your comfortable boundaries. Set aside a specific time each day for prayer. Choose a book of the Bible and read it through. Commit passages of Scripture to memory. Take a new witnessing challenge in the name of Jesus. You break out of spiritual complacency by taking some definite action that stretches you to the limit. What spiritual challenge will you accept today? —Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, p. 312

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read 2 Timothy 2:23, 24.
- » Imagine that in your church you are witnessing a state of spiritual lethargy. It could be that spiritual self-sufficiency keeps people from getting involved actively in mission. Let’s suppose that many of the people in the congregation attend church only to receive spiritual blessings and services. What are the dangers of going to church simply to be entertained?
- » What could you do to contribute to a solution? How could you be a change agent? How would service and active involvement help church members wake up and move away from spiritual complacency?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON UNITY IN THE
BODY OF CHRIST

- » Read Matthew 28:19, 20; Ephesians 4:5, 6; Colossians 3:10-15.
- » Unity—harmony, agreement, solidarity—working together toward a common goal. Our goal and mission is saving souls. If we focus on Christ and live so that others see Him in us, we will not be looking at the differences between us. God wants unity in our homes and in our churches.
- » How is unity displayed in your church?

- » How does your family, your church, handle differences?

- » Fill in the missing words. Texts are from the New King James Version.
“For as the body is _____ and has _____ members, but all the _____ of that one _____, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by _____ Spirit we were _____ into one body—whether _____ or _____, whether _____ or _____—and have _____ been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the _____ is not _____ member but _____” (1 Corinthians 12:12-14).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Galatians 3:27-29.
- » The Bible says that all the members of God’s church are supposed to work together as smoothly as the parts of a human body. The trouble is that in real life we see the feet arguing with the eyes, the ears insisting they can smell better than the nose—even right and left hands thumb-wrestling with each other! It’s not easy being part of a church that includes lots of different kinds of people.
- » Working together starts with accepting differences. We’re not all going to think or act alike. We accept people better when we understand them.
- » Maybe your church includes a lot of people from different racial or cultural groups—maybe even people from different countries who speak different languages. The more you learn about another person’s culture, the better you’ll understand where they’re coming from.
- » The same thing goes for younger and older people in the church. Senior citizens may not understand what it’s like being a teenager today. And you may not realize how different things were when they grew up, and how much that shapes the way they look at the world. Taking a little time to talk to each other and learn about differences can help all of you in the process to build positive relationships.
- » “Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God” (Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 96).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Psalm 133:1.
- » The church is made up of individuals and all the differences that each individual brings. Each of these individuals is a child of God and is loved so much that He sent His only Son to redeem them. You are one of His children. Redeemed. Loved. Just as each part of the body has a job to do, so do you. Your job, as a child of God, is to share His love with your family, your church, your neighborhood, your world. Think about and then answer the following questions.

What part of the body do you relate to? Are you an ear because you like to listen? A hand or foot because you like to help others? Or are you a mouth because you like to talk, read, or speak to others?

What are some things I can do to bring my church closer together?

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Match the phrase with the text. All verses are from the New King James Version.

John 13:34, 35	Ephesians 4:4-6	1 Corinthians 3:3	2 Timothy 2:23, 24
Psalms 133:1	Romans 15:1, 2	2 Corinthians 5:17	Ephesians 4:31, 32

- 1. “One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all . . .”
- 2. “Where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you . . .”
- 3. “A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all.”
- 4. “That you love one another; as I have loved you . . .”
- 5. “He is a new creation; old things have passed away.”
- 6. “How good and how pleasant it is.”
- 7. “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another.”
- 8. “And not to please ourselves.”

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20, 27.
- » Review the memory text.
- » You’re part of the church—part of Christ’s body. You may be an eye, clearly seeing what’s going on. You may be an ear, excellent at listening to both sides of the story. You may be a hand, ready to help in practical ways. You may be the tongue—quick to say the words everyone needs to hear.
- » You have a role to play in helping the church work together smoothly. Your part might be reaching out to someone who’s new and doesn’t fit in yet. You may have to try to understand and get along with someone who really irritates you. You may be called on to pitch in and help with a project.
- » Christianity is about your relationship with God—one on one. When you join God’s kingdom, you join His family. Growing closer to God also means growing closer to God’s people, learning to understand each other, forgiving each other, and working together.
- » “Picture a large circle, from the edge of which are many lines all running to the center. The nearer these lines approach the center, the nearer they are to one another. Thus it is in the Christian life. The closer we come to Christ, the nearer we shall be to one another. God is glorified as His people unite in harmonious action” (Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 179).



Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do” (Exodus 18:20).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 5, The Holy Spirit:** “Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He [the Holy Spirit] extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 98-100

WHY LEARN AND TEACH?

Mrs. Harrison was a Christian teacher. Everyone could tell she was different. She was loving and caring toward all her students. She was devoted to helping them grow and develop academically, physically, spiritually, and socially. She wasn’t afraid to step in and defuse tempers or put her arm around a child who needed a hug. She would really listen to her students and would do what she could to help solve whatever problems they brought to her. She orchestrated recess to include all children so none were left out, and she made sure no child was bullied. She organized tutoring to help students who were struggling with reading or math so they wouldn’t fall behind. And, most important, one day she prayed with me. She taught me that I wasn’t alone—that the Holy Spirit would help me. She showed what loving, Christlike service is all about.

Mr. Scott opened the doors to learning through nature. He showed us the connection between creation and a loving God. By having us explore, investigate, and test, He expanded our world to include an awesome universe. Many of us left behind fear and uncertainty for adventures in learning about nature, how things work, and how we fit into God’s world. He took us on nature walks and taught us to be silent, patient, and watchful. To find and observe the animals in their habitats. It is an amazing thing to wait quietly, patiently, and have an animal come up and eat out of your hand. He showed, by example, how to care for our environment and for the creatures around us. In every lesson he told us about a loving God who created all—for us!

Mrs. Smith would look beyond students’ shyness and help them to feel confident and unafraid of the future. She spoke caring, encouraging words, and explained that everything would be OK as long as they trusted in God. She helped them focus on what was important—their relationship with God. And today her students are successful and have a strong faith in God and in their future.

The person that impacted my life the most was Mrs. Cardy. She loved Jesus! Her life was a reflection of God. She was patient, kind, and caring. And when she prayed, it was as though God was sitting right there. She was delighted to study the Bible with me. She encouraged me and step by step helped me to build a lifetime relationship with Jesus.

Godly teachers that help us seek God’s kingdom are critical to our spiritual growth. They help us to grow in the classroom, and if we pay attention, we’ll take what we learn out of the classroom and realize that learning takes place anywhere and everywhere.

—Kathleen D. Sowards

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Titus 2:7.
- » A classmate has just received a bad grade for a class test. They are quite angry and complaining that the teacher didn’t grade fairly.
- » You are in the same class and know that your classmate is often disruptive in class, does little work, and didn’t study for the test. You know the teacher cares and grades carefully.
- » How do you respond when your classmate talks negatively about the teacher?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

- » John 14:26; John 16:7-13; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.
- » Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us, to guide us in the truth, and to reveal to us our life’s work. He gives to each person individual gifts that they are to use to serve God. Each person’s gifts are different from another’s. The Holy Spirit will guide and lead each of us through our studies, our activities, our teachers, and our parents to help us identify our strengths and weaknesses. Learning to depend on God and using the education we receive, we will be able to minister and share God’s message of love.
- » How do you see the Holy Spirit working in your life?
- » What kind of activities are you involved in that help you have a closer walk with God?

- » Using the words in the word bank, fill in the blanks. Think about how each gift helps you to grow in your relationship with God and how you can use it to help others learn about Him. Texts are from the New King James Version.

add all brotherly diligence faith self-control
godliness kindness knowledge love perseverance virtue

“But also for this very reason, giving _____, _____ to your _____, to virtue _____, to knowledge _____, to self-control _____, to perseverance _____, to godliness _____, and to brotherly kindness _____” (2 Peter 1:5-7).

Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read Read Proverbs 4:7.
- » Every day, in school and out, we are confronted by new information—Bible, math and science, history and politics, and English. We need to memorize texts, formulas, rules, and dates. Perhaps there are times you wonder if it is all necessary. Will you ever use all this material you are learning? Is it important?
- » As you get older, you will find that all the information you are gathering builds on itself. What you learned in first grade built on the material learned in kindergarten, and what you are learning this year built on what you learned last year. The things you learn next year will build on this year, and so forth—every day of your life.
- » Learning and gaining knowledge happens in a classroom and in daily living. Teachers are real people with real lives. Most teachers enjoy interacting with young people, encouraging them to learn and to become the best they can be. Teaching is about helping learners to think critically, distinguish between right and wrong, and know for themselves what God says. It is about learning to trust and depend on God.
- » Education isn’t just about school and learning. Education is a lifetime process of development that involves our whole being: (1) mental—being able to think critically and distinguishing right from wrong, truth from error; (2) physical—all components that lead to good health and well-being; (3) social—building and nurturing positive relationships and working together to reach common goals; and (4) spiritual—growing in the knowledge of God, His love, and our responsibility to those around us.
- » “It [education] is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come” (Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 13).

Friday

APPLYING

- » Ephesians 4:11, 12.
- » Getting and giving, learning and teaching, helps us to grow. God has given us our spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ. Serving God and others is twofold: when we serve others, it helps them to grow and in serving we grow. Think of different ways to share your spiritual gifts. Galatians 5:22, 23 gives us practical examples of “the fruit of the Spirit.” In the following examples, list how the activity serves and what you think the spiritual lesson is.

For Example: <i>Helping someone to ride a bike</i>	Service: <i>Helping them get on the bike, find their balance, and pedal</i>	Spiritual Lesson: <i>Read the Bible, pray, daily devotions—never give up</i>
Helping your little brother learn to play ball		
Helping a grandparent learn how to use a computer		
Helping a tourist learn some of the history of your town		
Helping a 5-year-old learn to write their name		
Telling your junior Sabbath School class about the solar system		
Baking cookies using a new recipe with a friend		
Teaching a class about plants in your local area		
Telling a friend how much God loves each of us		

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Find and match the text to the correct verse. All verses are from the New King James Version.

Proverbs 9:10

John 14:26

Romans 5:5

Proverbs 3:13

1 Corinthians 13:2

2 Corinthians 4:6
- 1. “He will teach you all things.”
- 2. “But have not love, I am nothing.”
- 3. “Who finds wisdom, and . . . gains understanding.”
- 4. “Beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One . . .”
- 5. “The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.”
- 6. “Light of the knowledge of the glory of God . . .”

Thursday

CONNECTING

- » Read Isaiah 11:2.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Learning is life.
- » We learn by studying, hard work, events around us, and often we gain life lessons through experience. God has not left us to learn on our own. He has given us the Scriptures to help us navigate this life. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105). And the Holy Spirit is to lead us to all truth and assist us in our work. “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).
- » Most fulfillment and joy comes from being able to share their our skills or knowledge with others. That might mean helping a friend who is struggling with their math homework, taking time to help a younger brother or sister master a new skill, volunteering at church or in your community, telling someone else about God, or even planning on becoming a full-time schoolteacher. Whatever our stage in life, not only can we begin to share the skills and knowledge we gained in school, but we can also share what we learned about Jesus, Creation, God’s love, Jesus’ sacrifice for our salvation, and His soon return.
- » “Whether we recognize it or not, we are stewards, supplied from God with talents and facilities, and placed in the world to do a work appointed by Him” (Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 137).





Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 19, The Law of God:** “The great principles of God’s law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God’s love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 138-141

THE PRICE
YOU PAY

When Benjamin Franklin was a child, an adult friend gave him a small amount of change as a gift. Young Ben used all the money to buy a whistle from a playmate. Benjamin went all through his house blowing on his whistle. He thoroughly enjoyed his new whistle till someone advised him that he had paid four times what it was worth. Instantly that whistle lost all its value to young Benjamin.

In later years Franklin remembered the bad bargain he had made in buying the whistle from his playmate. Whenever he observed someone sacrificing family for fame or fortune, he would say, “He pays too much for his whistle.”

Satan designs the things of this world to be attractive and pleasurable. There is nothing really wrong with wealth and fame unless we give up Jesus in the bargain to get them. For a child like young Benjamin Franklin, a lowly whistle may be the most desirable thing he can think of. As we grow up, however, we tend to become drawn to more sophisticated things.

—Gary B. Swanson, *The Moose, the Goose, and the Kingdom of God*, pp. 118, 119

How do we determine what is most worthwhile? How do we establish our priorities? Is the chase after the things we desire in line with God’s will for our lives? Where is Jesus and His kingdom in the order of our priorities?

You are no longer a child. Where you are in life is a transition between childhood and adulthood, and it begins now, in your early teen years. It’s a time you learn to take responsibility for the decisions you make. You will have to face the consequences of your choices. If you make wrong choices, they could change the course of your life for the worse. That’s why making wise choices is so important: they could change the rest of your life for the better. Every choice has a consequence, and it behooves you to think of the end result before making any decision. King Solomon advised in the book of Ecclesiastes: “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these God will bring you into judgment” (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 16:13.
- » It’s Sunday afternoon. Nothing much to do. You and your friends are just hanging out in the mall. It’s boring. You’ve done this a thousand times.
- » Then someone dares another to do something stupid. Everyone has a good laugh. But then the dares escalate. Each new one gets tougher and more dangerous. Excitement builds. It’s your turn. You are dared to do something you know is against the law.
- » How will you respond? How will your choice affect your friendships? How will your decision affect the way you feel about yourself? How will your choice affect your relationship with God?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE LAW OF GOD

- » Read Psalm 19:7-9; Revelation 14:12.
- » God’s law is the standard of how we should live. It helps us make right choices. As we endeavor to keep God’s law, the Ten Commandments, He prepares us to live eternally.
- » How has knowing and loving God helped you make right decisions?

- » Match the right choices with the correct commandment. See Exodus 20:1-17. Commandments are from the New King James Version.

A.	Always tell the truth.		“Honor your father and your mother.”
B.	Be committed to your spouse.		“You shall have no other gods before Me.”
C.	Do not make idols of earthly things.		“You shall not steal.”
D.	Be content with what you have.		“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.”
E.	Honor the Sabbath.		“You shall not bear false witness.”
F.	Respect what belongs to others.		“You shall not murder.”
G.	Put God first.		“You shall not make for yourself a carved image.”
H.	Be respectful to your parents.		“You shall not commit adultery.”
I.	Show reverence to God.		“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”
J.	Value life.		“You shall not covet . . . anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read James 1:5. It can be difficult to make decisions, especially if you feel torn between two parties. You’ve got parents expecting one thing of you and friends expecting another. You know what is right and what is wrong—usually it’s obvious. But life is so much easier if you can just keep everyone happy. Right?
- » So how do you make your own decisions? Are there times you feel as if you could use some help, but you can’t admit that to your friends or your parents? The truth is that everyone needs guidance—someone they can talk to who knows what they’re talking about. Sometimes it is helpful for someone to say, “This is what will happen if you go through Door A. But Door B will get you in deep trouble.” You can safely let God and His Word be your adviser.
- » Who better to take into your confidence? Who better to trust? Who else really knows you? Try God as your personal adviser. Your choices may not always be easy or may not always feel right. But, you can trust God to help you make the right decisions.
- » “The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man—the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will” (Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 685).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Isaiah 30:21.
- » With God’s help and some simple guidelines, you can make good decisions. Try this simple decision-making plan. It is the product of an early teen and his dad—to help make good decisions. It works for them; maybe it’ll work for you as well.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

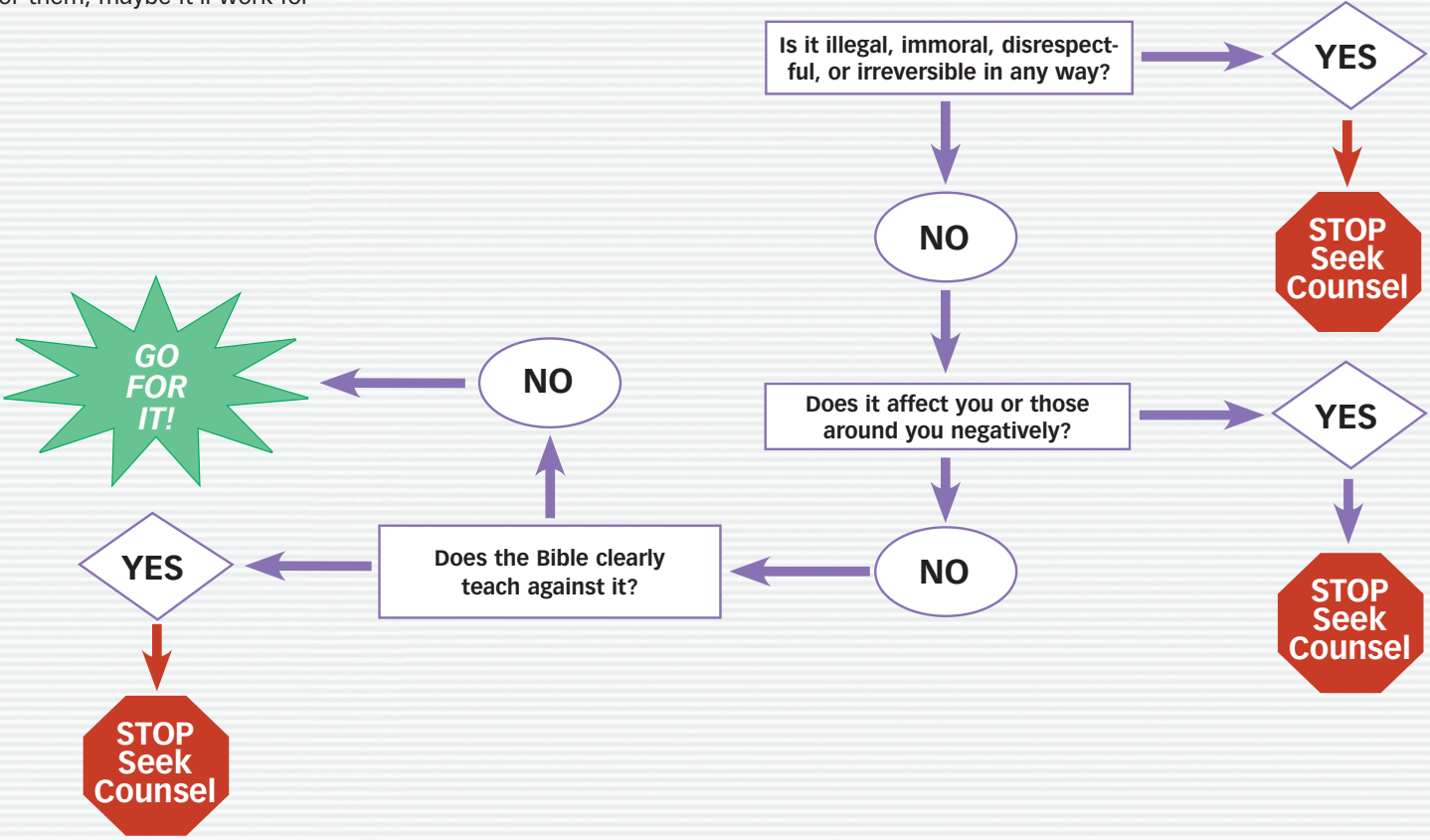
- » Look up the following texts. Write the text next to the correct verse. All the verses are from the New King James Version.

John 14:15 Joshua 24:15 Proverbs 8:10 Romans 12:2 Ephesians 5:15 1 John 5:3

1.	“And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”	
2.	“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”	
3.	“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”	
4.	“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”	
5.	“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.”	
6.	“Receive my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold.”	

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Romans 8:3, 4.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Remember the story of Jonah? He made some really bad choices. But in spite of Jonah’s choices, God didn’t give up on him. God chased after him in a storm.
- » Jesus loves you so much that even when you are in the middle of something that you know you shouldn’t be involved in, He is right there—ready to help you when you call. He does this because He understands your nature. He knows your weaknesses. He has been tempted more than any of us and yet He resisted temptation and overcame.
- » All He’s asking you to do is to take that big, courageous step and try to do things His way.
- » Jesus promises to help you when you call on Him. He has already paid the price for your sins. All you have to do is ask Him to forgive you and show you a better way to live. The decision is yours. Won’t you choose Him as your Savior?
- » “Every act of obedience to Christ, every victory obtained over self, is a step in the march to glory and final victory. Take Christ for your Guide and He will lead you safely along” (Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 25).





Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. . . . It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 141-143

THE BALANCING ACT

Imagine a girl on a balance beam. The balance beam is straight and narrow and placed several feet off the ground. Her goal is to maintain her balance while moving back and forth across the beam doing handstands, cartwheels, backflips, etc. She has to use every part of her body, often leaning a little to the left or a little to the right to keep perfect balance. She has to maintain her center of gravity at all times by focusing on the narrow beam.

Matthew 7:14 says, “But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (NIV). Staying on God’s balance beam requires keeping Jesus as our center of gravity, or we cannot stay balanced on that small, narrow road. Proverbs 3:6 also reminds us to “in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight” (NIV). Once again, in order to stay on the straight beam, or path, I must keep the center of my focus always on Him.

Do you think this anonymous poem sums it up?

tightrope

without You, I walk a tightrope,
i extend my hands for balance, staring at my feet.
my body trembles with uncertainty of what’s to come;
my knees feel weak. will my steps be sure?
my nerves unstable, feelings insecure,
my body trembles at the prospect of a fall.
all the focus on me, my hands, my feet, my knees,
all the focus on me, my fear.
You, You have set my feet on a firm place.
You, You have stood me firm.
You, You have set my feet on a firm place,
And i will not fear, i will trust.
i have no cause for worry, no,
i have no need to look down at my feet
when i can focus on the one who made me,
healed my soul, and gave me everlasting peace.
with my eyes fixed on You, secure, assured, and free.
my hope is in You. there is harmony
and perfect rhythm in my soul today.

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Colossians 1:10.
- » “If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 143).
- » How seriously do you take each day, each choice? How will those little choices of balance affect who you are, who you become?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON
CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read Romans 12:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 10:5; 3 John 2.
- » God created us, and He knows what is best for our minds and bodies. In following God’s plan for us, we can live healthy and balanced lives.
- » List the things you are doing that will help you be healthy—mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

- » What are some things you can do to improve the areas you feel are weak?

- » Fill in the blanks. Texts are from the New King James Version.
“For the _____ of God that brings _____ has appeared to all men, _____ us that, _____ ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should _____, _____, and _____ in the present age” (Titus 2:11, 12).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.
- » So, you’re young. Isn’t there enough time later to worry about what you eat, drink, how much you sleep, how positive your attitude is, and all that stuff? Isn’t that for old people who just want to live a little bit longer?
- » Well, the God who made you knows best how to help you maintain a healthful balance—in other words, an abundant life—at any age. He has the guidelines for a life you can celebrate and not regret. He offers guidance and power to help you make wise and balanced choices in every area of your lives.
- » In fact, think of CELEBRATIONS when you think of the abundant, balanced life God wants for you. C—Choices, E—Exercise, L—Liquids, E—Environment, B—Belief, R—Rest, A—Air, T—Temperance, I—Integrity, O—Optimism, N—Nutrition, S—Social Support.
- » Life and all its abundance and excess make it really difficult for us to keep our balance in these areas. And that is why we all need help. Jesus promises to give us His wisdom, courage, and strength to ensure that we are always able to strike a balance in our daily choices.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Philippians 4:8.
- » Review the memory text.
- » God created you, but He has left the daily management choices up to you to be made through the guidance and power of His Holy Spirit. Think encouraging and positive thoughts. Learn what God’s plan is for your life to find true fulfillment, happiness, and a good life balance.
- » In order to be really effective at balancing your life, you must identify who you want your center of focus to be. And then ask for God’s wisdom to make each of your choices in balance.
- » The life you are managing is one that God has redeemed and given back to you to manage. The emotional life, the social life, the spiritual life, the physical life—all are entrusted to you, and you have the choice to seek balance or experience the consequences of a life out of balance. Jesus says in John 10:10 that He came to this earth so that we might have a more abundant life. That is an awesome gift! All you have to do is keep your focus on Him and move forward one step at a time on the balance beam.
- » “All the powers of the mind should be called into use and developed, in order for men and women to have well-balanced minds” (Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 37).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Colossians 3:2.
- » When our imagined gymnast is learning to balance, the first thing they have to do is to climb up on that skinny little beam and keep their eye on it as they practice walking back and forth. Each time they fall off, their coach encourages them to get back up immediately and try again. The more they practice, the better their balance becomes, and they get to the place where they don’t even have to watch each step (each little choice), but can keep their primary focus on their center of gravity (Jesus).
- » Just how balanced are you? One step toward finding balance in life is to take a look at what might be out of balance. Decide where you are between the two

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Match the verse with the text. All verses are taken from the New King James Version.

1.	Proverbs 15:13	
2.	Matthew 11:28	
3.	Ecclesiastes 4:9	
4.	Colossians 3:9, 10	
5.	1 Thessalonians 5:16-18	
6.	Luke 12:22-24	
7.	Colossians 3:23	
8.	1 Timothy 4:8	
9.	Romans 8:6	
10.	Colossians 1:10	

A.	“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden.”
B.	“A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance.”
C.	“The new man who is renewed in knowledge . . .”
D.	“Two are better than one.”
E.	“To be spiritually minded is life and peace.”
F.	“Do not worry about your life.”
G.	“This is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
H.	“Godliness is profitable for all things.”
I.	“Do it heartily, as to the Lord.”
J.	“Being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

statements in each set to the right. The top statement in each pair is 1 on a scale of 1 to 10, and the bottom statement is a 10. In the box beside each set of statements, write the number between those two numbers that best describes you. When you are finished, you can find out your overall balance by adding all your numbers together and dividing by 12. How close are you to 5? Choose one area and get started “practicing” balance. Don’t forget the first and most important step. Ask Jesus to become the center of gravity (your focus) and help you find more and more balance every day.

C	Choices	I don’t even think before making choices. I worry about the choices I am making all the time.
E	Exercise	I don’t get any exercise. I exercise 20 hours a week.
L	Liquids	I don’t drink any water. I drink 100 glasses of water a week.
E	Environment	Littering is practically my hobby. I can’t sleep for worrying whether I recycled enough.
B	Belief in God	I don’t spend any time with God. I read my Bible 20 hours a week.
R	Rest	I sleep about an hour a night. I sleep 20 hours a night.
A	Air	I never breathe fresh air. I never come inside.
T	Temperance	I don’t have any control over myself. I don’t do anything for fear I will do something wrong.
I	Integrity	I never keep a promise if it’s inconvenient. I do everything everyone expects even if it’s unhealthful for them or me.
O	Optimism	I am depressed about everything. Everything is a joke.
N	Nutrition	I eat anything I please, anytime. I eat only broccoli and soybeans.
S	Social Support	I spend all my time taking care of others. I don’t need or help anyone.
Total:		÷ 12 = _____ Your overall balance score.



Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1, 2).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 25-27

WHAT GOES IN
STAYS IN

Jeff liked TV. His parents worked a lot, and so when he came home from school he would turn on the TV when he did his homework or his chores. When his parents would come home, dinner was usually eaten in front of the TV. After dinner the family would circle around the TV for some “quality time.” This was the way Jeff lived his life, and he really didn’t know there was another way.

When Jeff went to his friend Paul’s after school, his parents were at work too. Jeff noticed the new kind of TV hanging on the wall and asked if they could watch it.

“Maybe after our homework,” Paul said. But soon the homework was completed, since there were no distractions to slow it down. Again Jeff asked about watching the new TV. This time Paul admitted that he was not allowed to watch TV when his parents weren’t home. He explained to the surprised Jeff, “They let me watch only one show a day, and then only if they are home to watch it with me!”

Paul and Jeff did Paul’s chores and then washed up for dinner. At dinner the whole family sat down, and something unusual happened—they began to talk! To one another!

Recently Nielsen took a look at today’s American teen, raised in an age dominated by media choices like never before, from the Internet to cable channels to Web-connected devices galore.

Statistics say that your generation is watching more television and movies than ever before. What can be said about a generation of young people who spends more time on the couch than anywhere else? You don’t have to be part of the majority who choose such a self-destructive lifestyle. You are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14), and you have received from the Creator free will to choose how you live your life. Therefore choose daily to bring honor to God in each decision you make. Choose to feed your mind only with information that will elevate your thoughts and inspire your heart to achieve the great plans that God has for your life. You can do this if you rely only on Him. He will help you avoid and reject everything that is rubbish. If you choose Jesus daily as your guide, you will desire to watch, listen to, say, and do only things that He would want for you. With right choices you will grow closer and closer to God’s ideal for you and to the heart of Jesus.

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read 1 Peter 1:13-16.
- » This week, read over this lesson and then join in the dialogue on entertainment that has been happening on the Real-Time Faith discussion forum. Every section of this lesson gives you plenty to think about and discuss.

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read Ephesians 5:1-21.
- » Everything we do, everything we see, everything we hear, and everything we say should bring glory to God. We should guard against doing, seeing, hearing, and saying anything that would dishonor Him and weaken our Christian character.
- » How do our behaviors bring glory to God and reflect our true characters?

- » Unscramble the following verse. The verse is from the New King James Version.

whatever do all do therefore 10 glory you or you whether Corinthians 1 of eat God drink or to the :31

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Titus 2:11, 12.
- » An interesting idea exists in the world today. The idea is that somehow we are not connected to the things we put in our minds. We know this is not true when it comes to the things we eat. The poorer our diet, the more unhealthy we become. The same is true when it comes to those things we put in our brains.
- » You might have seen the commercials about “your brain on drugs.” However, could we ask ourselves the same question about the time we spend on our couches watching TV, as opposed to being outdoors, or working on our minds, bodies, and our relationship with God? I think we can! That means we have a job to do, and that job is to guard ourselves from what the world would have us put in our minds every day.
- » Sounds tough, and it can be. But it is important for us to try to separate ourselves from the identity that the world would want to give us.
- » The world, modern media, or whatever you want to call it does not care about you or me! It cares only about itself, and making sure there is enough money to continue itself. That means you have incredible control. All you have to do is decide to “opt out” of what the world wants you to buy. Simply “go on strike” to what the media wants you to identify with. In this way you show them that you are not the mindless drone they think you are. What a blow to the way the media thinks you, a teenager, will react. Wouldn’t it feel nice to show that you have some control over your life?
- » “Our recreations should not be scenes of senseless mirth, taking the form of the nonsensical” (Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People*, p. 364).

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Look up the texts and match the verse with the text. All verses are from the New King James Version.

1.	James 3:17	
2.	Deuteronomy 23:14	
3.	2 Timothy 2:22	
4.	Job 14:4	
5.	Philippians 2:15	
6.	Habakkuk 1:13	
7.	Matthew 5:8	

A.	"For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp."
B.	"Out of an unclean?"
C.	"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable."
D.	"The pure in heart, for they shall see . . ."
E.	"Pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace."
F.	"Why do You look on those who deal treacherously . . ."
G.	"Children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse . . ."

Thursday

CONNECTING

- » Read Philippians 4:8.
- » Review the memory text.
- » The reason this is important to you is that you are in control of what goes into and out of your brain. That’s right! Everything you see, you choose to see. Everything you listen to, you choose to listen to.
- » This puts a huge responsibility on us to guard ourselves from what the world is selling us. Of course, not all media is bad; however, the questions you need to ask yourself are these: “Do I make the best use of my time, energies, and skills when I watch TV?”; “Do I honor God when I watch that TV show or program?”; “What do I have to gain from choosing that form of entertainment?”; “Does it benefit anyone else if I watch a movie, TV program, video game, etc.?” If you can’t answer these questions, or you have never thought of them before, then it is time for you to begin to think about them.
- » The exercise for tomorrow will allow you to break down what it is that the world is trying to give you and what God is trying to give you.
- » “Your last thought at night, your first thought in the morning, should be of Him in whom is centered your hope of eternal life” (Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 666).

Friday

APPLYING

- » Read 2 Corinthians 10:5.
- » Filling out the following lists will help you think about the time you spend with the media and its type of entertainment. Whichever side you fill out first for each section, it will become apparent that the opposite is what goes in the other column.

What God wants **for** me

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

What God has **given** me

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

What following God **gives** me

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

What the world wants **for** me

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What the world has **given** me

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What following the world **gives** me

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____





Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty’ ” (2 Corinthians 6:17, 18).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholeness, joy, and goodness.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 24-27

HOW GOOD IS YOUR FILTER?

Sean and his parents love one another and their neighbors. In fact, they are outstanding members of their church. Everyone seems to love them. Sean and his parents like to do things together, and each night they make sure they gather around the TV and watch the most popular and entertaining shows. They have even talked about trying out together for one of those shows in which you do crazy things, like eat bugs, to get a cash prize.

Interestingly, because Sean and his parents watch TV together, they kind of know what the others like. For instance, when Sean wanted a new MP3 player, they knew exactly the one to get. The same thing worked for Sean when it was time to purchase gifts for his parents. Actually, they were so good at knowing what the other family members wanted, they had a tendency to indulge in gifts too often.

After a while Sean and his family were in a pretty serious situation when it came to their finances. It turned out that they were watching so much media, and being exposed to so much stuff they thought they “had to have,” that they started to make poor decisions about what they really needed. They were seeing the “latest and greatest” thing and deciding that they had to have each thing that was advertised.

They decided that they had been sort of tricked into it because they had become so familiar with the people on the shows that the characters seemed like “friends.” And friends wouldn’t try to sell you something you didn’t need. Would they?

After taking a hard look at their situation, Sean and his folks decided that very little that came out of their television was anything but advertising and trying to sell them something. Even the shows were trying to sell an image or an idea of the way things should be. This family decided to fast from the media for a while. Good news! They are now doing much better than they were before when buying too much stuff.

Does any of this sound familiar?

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read 1 John 2:15-17.
- » You are in the music store, and you see the newest CD by your favorite artist. You have been waiting for a long time for this artist to come out with a new CD, and you can’t wait to listen to it. You have heard the first single from the CD, and you really like it. You have made the decision not simply to download the CD—even though it is readily available online.
- » So, with your US\$15 plus, you go to pick it up. However, you find out that there are questionable lyrics included on the CD. What would you do?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON
CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:6.
- » God asks us to be different from the world in order that we may reflect His character. Life is precious, and we are to make a difference in the way we live. Our habits, our choices, our attitudes, everything we do and say, needs to be in harmony with the life of Christ.
- » How do the things you do, listen to, and watch reflect the life of Christ?

- » Fill in the blanks. The text is from the New King James Version.

“Therefore be _____ of _____ as dear children. And _____ in _____, as Christ also has _____ us and _____ Himself for us, an _____ and a _____ to God for a sweet-smelling _____” (Ephesians 5:1, 2).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:23.
- » You are constantly being faced with choices. From what food to eat for lunch to what show to spend your time watching. Obviously there are shows that are not worthy of your time. Often we don't think of our time as valuable. That is seen when we spend a majority of our time watching and listening to things that are not uplifting.
- » Just because something is entertaining does not mean it is something we should be watching. Most of the time the good doesn't outweigh the bad when sifting through different media in order to find the redeeming qualities. Yet what is objectionable is toxic even if taken in very small quantities. Have you ever asked yourself if it is worth risking your salvation in exchange for a little entertainment?
- » "[The true followers of Christ] will shun places of worldly amusement because they find no Jesus there—no influence which will make them heavenly-minded and increase their growth in grace" (Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 328).

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the following text with the verse. All verses are from the New King James Version.

1.	Matthew 13:14-16	
2.	Philippians 1:9, 10	
3.	2 Corinthians 10:7	
4.	Romans 12:2	
5.	Hosea 4:6	
6.	Colossians 3:17	
7.	1 Corinthians 10:23	

A.	"Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father."
B.	"Do you look at things according to the outward appearance?"
C.	"Not all things are helpful."
D.	"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."
E.	"That you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense . . ."
F.	"Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear."
G.	"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect . . ."

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Colossians 3:17.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Take your three favorite CDs, go to where your parents are, and open up the covers and show them the lyrics. Better yet, go listen to the CDs with your parents. Can you honestly do that? Can you truthfully give them the music you listen to so that they can evaluate it with you rather than without your ideas about it? This is where the rubber meets the road, so to speak. This is where you see if what you are listening to is something that you feel you should listen to.
- » It has been said that as Christians we approach this world with the eyes and ears of Christ. That is a great responsibility. Television, movies, music—they impact our lives every day. You may not think they are all bad. But how do we as Christians evaluate the media? We have to become aware of what God is saying to us. His Word gives us the basis on which to form our values. Then our values guide us in deciding what we should watch and what we should not watch; what we will and what we won't expose ourselves to. What does it have to do with you? They are your eyes and ears, but they also belong to Christ. Think about it . . .
- » "There is great need of temperance in amusements, as in every other pursuit. And the character of these amusements should be carefully and thoroughly considered" (Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 512).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Philippians 1:9, 10.
- » Log the hours and shows that you usually watch on TV on any given week. How does this chart help you see how you spend some of your time?

Shows and Times	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday



Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: ‘As I live, says the LORD, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’ So then each of us shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:10-12).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 4, The Son:** “God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 125-127

A TALE OF TWO JUDGES

Sitting in an airport waiting to board her plane sat a very tired woman with two small children about 3 and 5 years of age. The 5-year-old was racing around the walkway, while people shook their heads at the lack of control this mother had over her child.

Meanwhile, the 3-year-old wrestled around on her mother’s lap reaching for a soda cup to get another drink. While the child was drinking, the cup collapsed, and the dark liquid splashed all over the mother and child as well as a few well-dressed people nearby. The mother lost her temper at that point and swatted the little child on the backside while asking loudly, “Can’t you drink anything without spilling it?”

At this point people began to shake their heads in disgust at such a poor display of parenting. A woman nearby stomped away to call security. Soon two men in airport security garb came and began talking to the woman, along with one of the airline attendants. The woman who had made the report plopped down in her seat and stated to no one in particular, “Someone had to do something for those children.”

Just as she did that, an amazing thing happened. A kindly woman in business clothing put her briefcase down and joined the discussion. By this time all eyes were on this development, and everyone was wondering what would happen. The frazzled mother explained her plight to the security officers and the flight desk worker as they smiled compassionately at her and nodded with looks of concern. The businesswoman opened up her briefcase and pulled out paper and pens and began drawing pictures of animals while the 3-year-old named them out loud: “pig,” “cow,” “horsey,” “dog.”

As the call to board was announced, a look of relief swept over the mother’s face as the security officers and the attendant helped her gather up the family’s bags to get on the plane. The businesswoman, obviously distressed over the mother’s plight, could be heard to say: “She is raising those children alone. She and the children have been awake for 32 hours. The airlines lost their luggage and their baby stroller. Every flight she was taking to get back home has either been delayed or canceled. Her ATM card won’t work for some reason, and on this trip she has just learned that her mother (the children’s grandma) is dying of cancer. I have had my children on planes before, and it’s a nightmare. I don’t know how that woman is surviving.”

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 18:15-17.
- » Kenneth gets straight As in school. He is respected by the teachers and other students as one of the smartest guys in the class. Randy, who has to work hard just to do better than average, observed Kenneth using a cheat sheet during a major science exam. He was shocked. He kept the information to himself, but he watched during every exam, and sure enough, Kenneth cheated every time. When Kenneth got an award at assembly for academic success, Randy wanted to stand up and expose this cheater for the fraud that he was. One of Randy’s friends, Craig, commented on how he wished he could get good grades like Kenneth. That was all Randy could take. He coolly replied to Craig, “You can get good grades like Kenneth, if you cheat.” And then he walked off in a storm.
- » How should Randy, as a Christian, deal with his anger toward Kenneth and his outburst at the lockers with his friend Craig? What would have been the ideal response when he first noticed the cheating? What should he do about it now?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE SON

- » Read John 5:22; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19.
- » It is not our place to judge others. Jesus by His life and death has earned the right to be judge. He is our example in how to love the sinner and work to reconcile (reunite) them back to a relationship with Him.
- » What are some things you can do to help someone into a relationship with Jesus?

- » Fill in the blanks. The passage is from the New King James Version.

“Let this _____ be in _____ which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and _____ in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He _____ Himself and became _____ to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus _____ should _____, of those in _____, and of those on _____, and of those _____ the earth, and that _____ should _____ that _____ is _____, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:5-11).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read John 7:24.
- » If you have ever been on the receiving end of judgment, you know how painful it can be. Receiving a rebuke tends to put us on the defensive, which doesn't help us grow. But don't walk away from the challenge of helping others grow. It's hard, but it may be one of the greatest tools in the spreading of the gospel, because it models the way Jesus won people to Himself while He was here on earth. He exposed sin for what it was, but the sinner was joyfully restored to a better life. People were drawn to the way He told the truth.
- » How can we help others choose a better path, as Jesus did? The key might be in the way we react. First, we check ourselves and remember every time we have done something similar. Next, we ask God's mercy and ask Him to help us see clearly enough to help someone else. Help won't come through judgment, but through grace. Finally, thoughtfully and prayerfully write that note or say those words that will point your friend to a better way.
- » Whatever you do, don't walk away from this challenge. Think about where the church would be if we just left one another alone with our problems.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read John 3:17.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Walking into the courtroom to pay for a traffic ticket, a young man noticed, to his joyful surprise, that the judge was his former soccer coach. Whew! While the young man knew the judge well enough to know that he would be driving differently as a result of this time in the courtroom, he was at least confident that he would be shown mercy.
- » Everything has to do with being confident in the one who judges us. We know that Christ loves us and has paid with His life to lead us to a better way. His correction, even though it might be strong, will always be loving. That isn't always the case with those who judge us on earth—the critics and the gossips.
- » Before we write off those who have judged us, however, we had better check the list again and see if our name has ever been on it. We might find that there have been times we have stabbed people in the back with our words. There are probably times we have been unkind and didn't feel a bit sorry. And likely times we have judged others unkindly and wrongfully.
- » If you find that your name might be on the list, erase it with the blood of Christ. By faith we can have this assurance, but remember that by faith others have the same right to the mercy of God.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the verse with the text. All verses are from the New King James Version.

1.	Luke 6:37, 38	
2.	Romans 14:10-12	
3.	Matthew 18:15-17	
4.	Romans 6:23	
5.	John 3:17	
6.	Ezekiel 7:27	
7.	John 7:24	

A.	"By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."
B.	"God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world."
C.	"Judge with righteous judgment."
D.	"The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
E.	"Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned."
F.	"According to what they deserve I will judge them."
G.	"For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Luke 6:41-43.
- » Try a quick judgment check. In the table below, write some common things that really bother you about other people. Avoid the extremes—superficial things such as wearing socks with sandals or horrific crimes in which someone is abused or killed. Instead, focus on the things that you meet up with every day that are wrong—such as gossip, exclusion, dishonesty, arrogance, etc. Note how often you've done the same thing.
- » Then look at your list and ask yourself: How many times have I helped someone overcome this problem? If I did so, did I show the kind of love and mercy Jesus showed?

BRIEFLY STATE YOUR JUDGMENTS BELOW	CHECK THE BOX THAT APPLIES		
THINGS THAT I THINK ARE OFFENSIVE . . .	I NEVER DO THAT	I SOMETIMES DO THAT	I DO THAT A LOT
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

